



A BABY'S PLACE OF ALABAMA, INC.

P. O. BOX 590025, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35259

PHONE: (205) 939-1514 FAX: (205) 933-2555

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November 7, 1994

Covenant Metropolitan Church
P.O. Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

Dear Sir: *MARGE*

December 1 of each year is designated internationally as "World AIDS Day," a day to expand and strengthen the worldwide effort to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

We urge you to support **World AIDS Day Call To Action** by joining other local congregations in the "14 Bells" Project. We ask that you ring your steeple bell 14 times at 1:40 p.m. on Thursday, December 1, signifying the 14 years of the epidemic and those we have lost.

In addition, we would ask that on Sunday, November 27, you speak about the significance of this day and what we, as Christians, can do to offer support. On the attached sheet, we suggest ways that individuals or groups can become involved in supporting AIDS programs or people living with AIDS as well as an announcement we would like for you to put in your church newsletter or bulletin.

This disease continues to affect all of us in our own community, with 1290 people living with AIDS the State of Alabama and 863 of those in Jefferson County alone. One thousand six hundred eight people have already died. It will take a partnership effort to educate the public and offer compassionate support to those in need.

If you have any questions, please call 939-1514 for more information. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this endeavor.

God Bless,

[Signature]
Glenda G. Hollis
Executive Director

2 Enclosures

Announcement for Newsletter:

On Thursday, December 1, there will be a candlelight vigil at 6:00 p.m. at the Fountain at 5 Points South and proceeding to Southside Baptist Church where there will be an interdenominational service from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

THINGS YOU CAN DO ABOUT AIDS

- ♥ Volunteer to be a Pen Pal or Phone Buddy - send a "Thinking of You" card.
- ♥ Visit a (Person With Aids) or take him or her for a drive or to the movie - be a companion.
- ♥ Donate Food World certificates for Christmas dinner.
- ♥ Use the AIDS Awareness stamps.
- ♥ Conduct/attend HIV/AIDS education meetings.
- ♥ Start or get involved in an AIDS Care Team.
- ♥ Volunteer to drive an AIDS patient to the doctor.
- ♥ Donate money, food, clothes or medical equipment.
- ♥ Cook or organize a meal for persons living with HIV one night.
- ♥ Volunteer at a local AIDS organization or medical facility:

A Baby's Place - 939-1514
AIDS Task Force of Alabama - 592-2437
AIDS In Minorities - 323-7949
Birmingham AIDS Outreach - 322-4197



*A non-profit organization
dedicated to state-wide
HIV/AIDS prevention and
housing for persons living
with AIDS.*

November 8, 1994

Covenant Metropolitan Church
P.O. Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

Dear Sir/Madam:

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Alan Woelhart

*AGAPE Board Representative

STAFF

Randall H. Russell
Executive Director

December 1 of each year is known as "World AIDS Day," as a way to promote the worldwide effort to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

We would like you to support World AIDS Day Call To Action by joining local churches in the "14 Bells" Project. We ask that you ring your steeple bell 14 times at 1:40 p.m. on Thursday, December 1, proclaiming the 14 years of the epidemic and those who have lost the battle with AIDS.

We ask that on November 27, you speak about the importance of this day and what we can do to offer support. The attached sheet suggests ways that individuals or groups can become involved in supporting AIDS programs or people living with AIDS, as well as an announcement, we would like for you to put in your church bulletin.

With 863 persons living with AIDS in Jefferson County alone, this disease continues to affect all of us in our own community. There are 1,290 people who live with AIDS in the State of Alabama; 1,608 people have already died. It will take a group effort to educate the public and support those in need.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (205) 592-2437. Thank you for your cooperation to participate in this matter.

Sincerely,

Randall H. Russell
Executive Director

bg

ENCL

P.O. BOX 55703
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35255
205-592-2437
FAX 205-592-4998



*A non-profit organization
dedicated to state-wide
HIV/AIDS prevention and
housing for persons living
with AIDS.*

Announcement For Bulletin:

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Red Ribbon Reflections

UAB 1917 Clinic, 908 South 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35294-2050 Phone: (205) 934-1917; Fax: (205) 975-6448

The UAB
1917 Clinic
AIDS Education
Project for
Congregations

November 15, 1994



Please
highlight
this
information
in
your
congregational
newsletters
or bulletins!

Thursday, December 1

Special activities planned for World AIDS Day



10:00 a.m.

The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt (10 a.m.-6 p.m., free admission)
The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, 520 16th Street North, phone: 328-9696.

12:15 p.m.

A Time of Prayer & Music for Musicians and Others Who Have Died of AIDS
(Unitarian Church of Birmingham, 2365 Cahaba Road)

1:40 p.m.

The Tolling of the Bells

(All congregations with bells are asked to ring 14 times for the 14 years of the AIDS epidemic, and to remember family members who have been affected.)

6:00 p.m.

Candlelight Gathering

Five Points South fountain in front of Highlands United Methodist Church,
1045 South 20th Street

6:30 p.m.

Interfaith Prayer Service at Southside Baptist Church, 1016 19th Street South
Sponsored by all AIDS service organizations and clinics in Birmingham

A new breeze is blowing in Birmingham

AIDS Care Teams

Welcome to the first edition of *Red Ribbon Reflections* (RRR). The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage individuals in the faith community to respond to the AIDS epidemic with compassion, education, and ministry.

Special
Worship
Services

The religious community, as a whole, has responded with silence or judgment to the AIDS epidemic. We have been more focused on how a person becomes infected than how we can help. We have allowed others to speak for us. But, a new breeze is blowing in Birmingham. It is a refreshing breeze of mercy and compassion for persons affected by HIV/AIDS.

Congregational
HIV/AIDS
Education

Why do I make such a statement? Because a dozen new AIDS Care Teams in six different faith groups are now being formed in Birmingham. Because congregations are planning worship services and educational events in 1995 to focus on persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Because people of faith are looking for ways to get involved and make a difference, one by one. We still have a long way to go, but we are making progress.

Volunteers
are stepping
forward

And as we reach out to others, something happens to us as well. When we try to love God with all of our being, and our neighbor as ourselves, we too are changed. Love is a powerful force. Grace and shalom to you as you care for others. --Malcolm Marler, AIDS Chaplain

AIDS Care Teams

What is an AIDS Care Team? The purpose of an AIDS Care Team (ACT) is to provide unconditional compassionate care for people with AIDS and relief support for their caregivers. An ACT usually consists of 12 or more persons who become "extended family" to someone who needs additional support.

What does an ACT do? Each team's activities are based upon the needs of the client. Some of these needs may include: Preparing or delivering a meal; sitting with the Care Receiver while a family member runs errands; grocery shopping; transportation to the doctor; taking a client or family member out to eat or to a movie; or other household chores.

How much time does an ACT require? You decide. Maybe you can serve 4 hours a week or a few hours per month. Weekdays, weeknights, or weekends may be best for you. Just let your team leader know.

Worship being planned for '95

Congregations from the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths are responding to having one worship service in '95 that focuses on AIDS. Call Malcolm for more information or to get on the schedule.

What if my congregation doesn't have enough people to start an ACT? Individuals simply need to contact Joe Elmore, ACT Director at 934-1917, and he will link you up with an existing team.

If you have 5 or 6 people in your congregation who want to be on a team, we can add other individuals to your team to fill it out and get you started.

When is the next available ACT training? Individuals or additional teams are welcome to attend the following events. Reservations are required by calling Joe Elmore at 934-1917.

1994
November 17, 6:30 p.m.
Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, 1114 Oxmoor Road, Birmingham.

November 18, 8:15 a.m.
Birmingham Baptist Association, 2501 12th Avenue North, Birmingham.

GRACE goes on the road

If you have a group of 25 or more, Friday Morning GRACE can now come to you. The popular AIDS education program for the religious community at the 1917 Clinic has had over 300 persons participate since June. GRACE continues to meet every Friday from 9-11 a.m. Call 934-1917 to make reservations.

AIDS Care Team Training 1995

January 14 * March 11 * May 13
July 8 * September 9 * November 11

2nd Saturday, every other month
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the 1917 Clinic
Reservations required
by calling Joe Elmore, 934-1917

Plan now to have your team, or new members on your team, present at a training event in 1995!

New volunteer program begins at the 1917 Clinic

A new volunteer program is up and running at the UAB 1917 Clinic this Fall with the arrival of Judy Bowers as Volunteer Coordinator. Judy is full-time for one year through the AmeriCorps program, an initiative by President Clinton that is similar to the Peace Corps.

Individuals now have four different positions to volunteer:

Clinic Host (4 hrs./week on one afternoon, M-Th);

Research Volunteer (4 hrs./week on one morning or afternoon, M-Th);

Hospital Chaplain (2-4 hrs./week on one morning, afternoon, or evening per week, primarily for persons with Clinical Pastoral Education

experience. Open to lay persons or clergy).

AIDS Care Team Participant (time is flexible).

An excellent training program is offered. Call Judy Bowers for more information, 934-1917.

THE UNIVERSITY of
ALABAMA at BIRMINGHAM
1917 Clinic
908 So. 20th Street
Birmingham, AL 35294-2050
Phone: 205-934-1917

Michael S. Saag, M.D.
Medical Director

AIDS Education Project
Rev. Malcolm Marler, D.Min.
AIDS Chaplain
Phone: 205-934-1917
FAX: 205-975-6120
E-Mail: ATPK93A@Prodigy.Com

Rev. Joe Elmore
Director, AIDS Care Team Project

Judy Bowers
Volunteer Coordinator

An Interfaith AIDS Memorial Service

World AIDS Day, December 1, 1994, 6:30 p.m.

Southside Baptist Church
1016 19th Street South
Birmingham, Alabama



Sponsoring Agencies

A Baby's Place of Alabama, Inc.
AIDS Task Force of Alabama
Birmingham AIDS Outreach
Children's Aid Society
Family Clinic at Children's Hospital
of Alabama
Jefferson County AIDS in Minorities

Jefferson County Health Department
St. George's Clinic at Cooper Green
Hospital
UAB AIDS Center
UAB Hospice
UAB 1917 Clinic
Veteran's Administration of
Birmingham HIV Clinic

Worship Order

for All People of Faith

Presentation of the Light		Maggie
Words of Welcome		Marge Ragona
Call To Worship		Marge Ragona
Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures		Jonathan Miller
Special Music	<i>You'll Never Walk Alone</i>	Mark Lawrence
A Reflection	<i>Dirge Without Music</i>	Tony Morris
Reading from the Hindu Faith		Sushila Ananda
Remembering Those Who Have Died of AIDS		Congregation
(Please stand if you want to say the first name of someone who has died of AIDS. You will be called on and Susan will repeat it so that everyone can hear. A red carnation will be placed on the table in his or her memory. After the service, anyone is free to take a carnation with you.)		
Prayer of Thanksgiving		Susan Clayton
Special Music	<i>On Eagle's Wings</i>	Mark Lawrence
Remembering Those Living with HIV/AIDS		Congregation
(Please stand if you want to say the first name of someone living with HIV/AIDS. You will be called on and Malcolm will repeat it so that everyone can hear.)		
Prayer of Hope		Bridgid Clarke
Meditation	<i>"Creating Family"</i>	Malcolm Marler
Closing Hymn	<i>Great is Thou Faithfulness</i>	Hymn #37
Benediction		Joe Elmore

Dirge Without Music

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in the hard ground.
So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been, time out of mind:
Into the darkness they go, the wise and the lovely.
Crowned with lilies and with laurel they go; but I am not resigned.

Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.
Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.
A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew,
A formula, a phrase remains--but the best is lost.

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the laughter, the love, --
They are gone. They are gone to feed the roses. Elegant and curled
Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know. But I do not approve.
More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses in the world.

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.
I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

Special Thanks To

Southside Baptist Church, Dr. Dale Chambliss, pastor
Presbytery of Shepherds and Lapsley (candles)

Participants

Maggie	Person Living with HIV/AIDS
Rev. Marge Ragona	Pastor, Covenant Metropolitan Community Church
Rabbi Jonathan Miller	Rabbi, Temple Emanu-El
Mr. Tony Morris	Director, Jefferson County AIDS in Minorities
Swami Sushila Ananda	UAB Chaplain to the Hindu Community
Rev. Susan Clayton	Associate Pastor, First Presbyterian Church
Sister Bridgid Clarke	Chaplain, St. Vincent's Hospital
Dr. Malcolm Marler	Chaplain, UAB 1917 Clinic
Rev. Joe Elmore	Director, AIDS Care Team Training, UAB 1917 Clinic
Mark Lawrence	Soloist
Dr. Barry Vaughn	Pianist

A Commitment on HIV/AIDS by All People of Faith

We are members of different faith communities called by God to affirm a life of hope and healing in the midst of HIV/AIDS. The enormity of the pandemic itself has compelled us to join forces despite our differences of belief. Our traditions call us to embody and proclaim hope, and to celebrate life and healing in the midst of suffering.

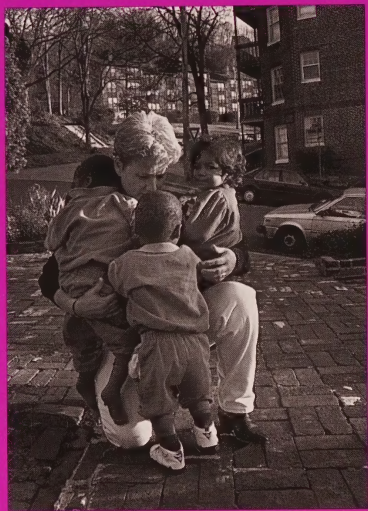
AIDS is an affliction of the whole human family, a condition in which we all participate. It is a scandal that many people suffer and grieve in secret. We seek hope amidst the moral and medical tragedies of this epidemic in order to pass on hope for generations to come.

We recognize that there have been barriers among us based on religion, race, class, age, gender, and sexual orientation which have generated fear, persecution and even violence. We call upon all sectors of our society, particularly our faith communities, to adopt as highest priority the confrontation of racism, classicism, ageism, sexism, and homophobia.

As long as one member of the human family is afflicted, we all suffer. In that spirit, we declare our response to the AIDS pandemic.

- 1. We are called to love.** God does not punish with sickness or disease, but is present together with us as the source of our strength, courage and hope. The God of our understanding is, in fact, greater than AIDS.
- 2. We are called to compassionate care.** We must assure that all who are affected by the pandemic [regardless of age, race, gender, nationality or sexual orientation] will have access to compassionate, non-judgmental care, respect, support and assistance.
- 3. We are called to witness and do justice.** We are committed to transform public attitudes and policies, supporting the enforcement of all local and federal laws to protect the civil liberties of all persons with AIDS and other disabilities. We further commit to speak publicly about AIDS prevention and compassion for all people.
- 4. We promote prevention.** Within the context of our respective faiths, we encourage accurate and comprehensive information for the public regarding HIV transmission and means of prevention. We vow to develop comprehensive AIDS prevention programs for our youths and adults.
- 5. We acknowledge that we are a global community.** While the scourge of AIDS is devastating to the United States, it is much greater in magnitude in other parts of the world community. We recognize our responsibility to encourage AIDS education and prevention policies, especially in the global religious programs we support.
- 6. We deplore the sins of intolerance and bigotry.** AIDS is not a "gay" disease. It affects men, women and children of all races. We reject the intolerance and bigotry that has caused many to deflect their energy, blame the victims and become preoccupied with the issues of sexuality, worthiness, class status, or chemical dependency.
- 7. We challenge our society.** Because economic disparity and poverty are major contributing factors in the AIDS pandemic and barriers to prevention and treatment, we call upon all sectors of society to seek ways of eliminating poverty in a commitment to a future of hope and security.
- 8. We are committed to action.** We will seek ways, individually and within our faith communities, to respond to the needs around us.

This statement was drafted by the Council of National Religious AIDS Networks meeting in Washington, DC in May, 1994.



*“What a wonderful,
warm place,
and these
children are so
totally loved.”*



Elizabeth Kubler-Ross,
after visit to A Baby's Place in April 1993.



"A BABY'S PLACE" IS FULL OF MIRACLES.

I thought my heart would burst as I looked at that tiny 2-pound baby girl. Sarah was born 15 weeks premature and HIV+. Her teenage mother refused to touch her and abandoned her in the hospital. We visited and fed her there. She finally gained to 4 pounds, and we brought her "home." Sarah was so stiff and jittery . . . we rocked, we sang, and fed her every two hours . . . whatever she desired was freely given. At 15 months, Sarah shed all of her mother's antibodies and tested negative for HIV. She was walking and talking—and pure delight. When she left us, she was a healthy, sensitive, loving and loved little girl.

*Over 50% of babies born to HIV+ women
will NOT be carriers of the virus.*

Toby was 6 months old and literally dying with AIDS when he came to us and was given three weeks to live. His mother was too involved with her own fight for life to give him the care he so desperately needed. We took him with very little hope in our hearts for his survival. As he became embraced by the love within these walls, he responded. His mom died last year. Toby still has severe

neurological and physical challenges, but he is still living with us, with a great quality of life. We just celebrated his fourth birthday and are living one day at a time with hope.

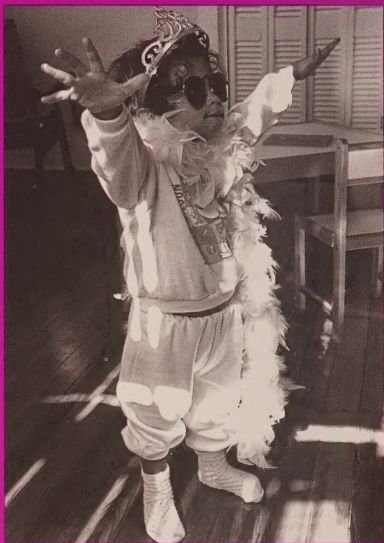
The availability of new drugs and research increases the life expectancy for HIV+ children.

"A BABY'S PLACE" IS FULL OF COMFORT.

Robby was 18 months old and had been hospitalized repeatedly since birth with numerous opportunistic infections. He came to us for respite care many times as an alternative to hospitalization. His 17-year-old mom really tried, but as his death became imminent, she asked if we would care for him during his final days. He was in such pain we carried him on a pillow and fed him with a syringe. His presence was such a beautiful experience; he never walked nor spoke a word, but never failed to pat us when we'd pick him up. Even with five other babies, caring for him never felt laborious. His smile, his manner, his comforting touch . . . he gave to us so much more than he took. Thank you for your time and lessons, little man.

Currently in Alabama, the majority of HIV infected children are born to women 15 to 19 years of age.





"A BABY'S PLACE" IS FULL OF LIFE.

We took Janie when she was three days old, HIV+, suffering from crack/cocaine. For four long months, she screamed night and day and seemed impossible to comfort. Finally she seemed to respond to our love and nurturing and started bonding; she also moved into the status of AIDS. She thrived, gaining weight, then walking and self feeding at 11 months. Parental rights were terminated at 24 months, and she was placed for adoption. And I made a decision. She had grown so in our hearts that the thought of her going through emotional withdrawal was unbearable. This was her "home," and the only choice for me was to make her legally my own. What a blessing she has been to all of us and will no doubt be my greatest teacher. Yes, she has AIDS, but so far she has been blessed with a great life and very few days of actual sickness. When the day comes for her transition from this life, we will feel great sadness but also great joy in knowing we recognized "our family" and we shared all that we had.

*Within the next decade at least 125,000
children will become orphans of this epidemic.*

• "A BABY'S PLACE" IS FULL OF DEDICATION.

When we opened in October of 1989, we did so with the purpose of ensuring that for infants and children with AIDS "their short stay with us on this planet would be a warm, love-filled, and nurtured experience." We are proud that we have played a leading role in the enrichment of many children's lives within our "home." Unlike many states, Alabama has never had an HIV+ child who was left to live in a hospital because he had no other place to call home. As this epidemic has grown, we have made every effort to extend our mission of love and caring to embrace those children outside our home who have so much deprivation. We are truly blessed and humbled to be in the position to carry on this mission and realize we take credit for some incredible acts of kindness and love. However, we are acutely aware that our work is only possible through the dedicated, generous, open-hearted individuals who provide us with the physical, material, and financial support to continue.

—Glenda Hollis

*Glenda G. Hollis, founder of A Baby's Place, Inc,
has been a licensed foster parent through
Children's Aid Society for 10 years.*





Serving pediatric AIDS throughout Alabama

A BABY'S PLACE was founded in 1989 and incorporated as a nonprofit 501 © 3 agency in 1991. **A BABY'S PLACE, INC.** is a **statewide** AIDS service organization that serves children from birth to 13 years infected/affected by HIV/AIDS.

STATEWIDE SERVICES TO FAMILIES

- ♥ Provide medications and medical supplies, food, formula, and vitamins.
- ♥ Provide clothing, linens, diapers, baby-care items, and furnishings.
- ♥ Respite and "Mothers Day Out" program that offer relief to primary caregivers.
- ♥ Financial assistance for shelter, funerals, and other basic needs.
- ♥ Transportation to and from medical appointments.
- ♥ Emotional support in the clinic by phone and visitations.
- ♥ Social support groups and family-centered gatherings.
- ♥ Bedside attendance in the hospital.

IN-HOUSE FOSTER CARE

- ♥ A nurturing "home" environment with a loving, trained staff of professionals and volunteers.
- ♥ Permanent long-term placement for HIV+ infants abandoned in hospitals, orphaned by parents' deaths, and those with no parents or extended families.
- ♥ Short-term care while parents are sick or hospitalized, in need of mental health support, or attending drug treatment programs; temporary protective placement by the state.
- ♥ A high level of individualized, round-the-clock, nurturing care.
- ♥ In-home hospice care for children requiring specialized attention as an alternative to hospitalization; nurses provided when needed.
- ♥ Ongoing, supportive relationship with family of origin, extended family, or new foster families.

EDUCATION

- ♥ Recruitment and educational programs for foster parents statewide.
- ♥ Direct care training and nutritional counseling for families and caregivers.
- ♥ Educational materials for Children's Hospital of Alabama specialty clinics, schools, churches, and businesses.
- ♥ Training workshops for churches, day-care workers, college students, community professionals, and volunteers.

For additional information, or to send donations, contact

A BABY'S PLACE, INC.

P.O. Box 590025 * Birmingham, AL 35259-0025
(205) 939-1514

